



**City of Milwaukee Common Council**

**Legislative File Number 071114 (version 0)**

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**..Number**

071114

**..Version**

ORIGINAL

**..Reference**

**..Sponsor**

ALD. BAUMAN

**..Title**

Resolution expressing the City of Milwaukee's support for a new strategic approach to transportation investments in Southeastern Wisconsin.

**..Analysis**

This resolution expresses the City of Milwaukee's opposition to the proposed \$1.9-billion reconstruction and expansion of Interstate 94 from the Illinois-Wisconsin state line to the Mitchell Interchange. It also expresses the City's support for a new strategic approach to transportation investments in Southeastern Wisconsin that includes the reconstruction and modernization of Interstate 94 between the Mitchell Interchange and the Illinois-Wisconsin state line using the highway's current 6-lane configuration and using the resulting cost savings to:

- a. Develop the 33-mile Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail line between the Kenosha Metra station and Downtown Milwaukee without requiring local governments to finance the local share of capital and operating costs; and
- b. Develop high-speed intercity passenger rail service along the existing Amtrak line between Chicago and Milwaukee, with an extension westward to Madison.

**..Body**

Whereas, On November 15, 2007, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation ("WisDOT") revealed its preferred plan for reconstruction and expansion of the 35-mile segment of Interstate 94 from the Illinois-Wisconsin state line to the Mitchell Interchange; and

Whereas, This plan calls for increasing the number of freeway lanes from 6 to 8 and creating additional interchanges; and

Whereas, This expansion will result in the loss of valuable farmland and wetlands and encourage urban sprawl, especially around the reconstructed and new interchanges; and

Whereas, The expansion of this highway will promote motor vehicle use and

dependence, thereby increasing air pollution and reliance on foreign oil supplies and leaving the economy and residents of the region at the mercy of gasoline price fluctuations; and

Whereas, This plan's singular focus on highway expansion and motor vehicle travel ignores the public's growing preference for a balanced, multi-modal transportation system that gives travelers and shippers a variety of options for personal and business travel and cargo transport; and

Whereas, The estimated cost of the proposed Interstate 94 reconstruction and expansion is \$1.9 billion, making it the most expensive road construction project in Wisconsin history; and

Whereas, While the State of Wisconsin is proceeding with these plans to reconstruct and expand Interstate 94 without requiring local governments to pay any part of the project's capital and operating costs, it is requiring local governments to pay the local share of the capital and operating costs of the proposed 33-mile, \$198-million Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee ("KRM") commuter rail line, thereby bogging the KRM project down in local politics; and

Whereas, The KRM commuter rail line would parallel Interstate 94 just a few miles to the east and provide an alternative route to alleviate congestion on the freeway both during the reconstruction phase and after completion of the project; and

Whereas, WisDOT also recently announced its support for a proposal to implement high-speed intercity rail service between Chicago, Milwaukee and Madison, in part over a rail line that again closely parallels Interstate 94, using a combination of state and federal funds, although WisDOT has not secured any funding commitment for this initiative from the United States Congress and is unlikely to do so in the near future; and

Whereas, These 3 transportation improvement initiatives -- the Interstate 94 reconstruction/expansion, the KRM commuter rail line and the development of high-speed intercity passenger rail service - have been developed independently of one another, with little or no consideration for the possible overlap of transportation services or, conversely, the potential for transportation infrastructure to be improved in a complementary, rather than competitive, fashion; and

Whereas, Rather than spending hundreds of millions of dollars to expand Interstate 94 from 6 to 8 lanes, the federal and state governments should fund reconstruction and modernization of this highway in its current 6-lane configuration and invest a portion of the resulting cost savings in development of the KRM commuter rail line and the Chicago-Milwaukee-Madison high-speed rail line, thereby enhancing mobility and travel options in Southeastern Wisconsin while at the same time providing an overall savings to taxpayers; and

Whereas, A balanced, multi-modal approach to the provision of transportation infrastructure in Southeastern Wisconsin would also give the region a hedge against the

economic impacts of gasoline price increases that are likely to occur in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee, that the City of Milwaukee opposes the proposed reconstruction and expansion of Interstate 94 between the Mitchell Interchange and the Illinois-Wisconsin state line at a cost of \$1.9 billion; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the City of Milwaukee supports a new strategic approach to transportation investments in Southeastern Wisconsin that is multi-modal in nature and that includes the reconstruction and modernization of Interstate 94 between the Mitchell Interchange and the Illinois-Wisconsin state line using the highway's current 6-lane configuration and using the resulting cost savings to:

- a. Develop the 33-mile Kenosha-Racine-Milwaukee commuter rail line between the Kenosha Metra station and Downtown Milwaukee without requiring local governments to finance the local share of capital and operating costs; and
- b. Develop high-speed intercity passenger rail service along the existing Amtrak line between Chicago and Milwaukee, with an extension westward to Madison.

; and, be it

Further Resolved, That the City Clerk is directed to send copies of this resolution to Governor Doyle, the City of Milwaukee's representatives in the Wisconsin Legislature, Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation Busalacchi and all members of Wisconsin's congressional delegation.

**..Requestor**

**..Drafter**

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JDO

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